



# News from White Haven

Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site, dedicated to Civil War General and 18th President Ulysses S. Grant and his wife, Julia Dent Grant, is located in south St. Louis County, Missouri.

News from White Haven is a quarterly publication of Ulysses S. Grant NHS. It is also available online by visiting [www.nps.gov/ulsg/](http://www.nps.gov/ulsg/).

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## New address? Going green?

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The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

## Enjoy Spring at White Haven



The blooming trees make White Haven a great place to enjoy a walk or participate in one of our many upcoming events.

Looking for something to do besides spring yardwork? Enjoy one or several of these upcoming programs:

**April 5, 10 am & 1 pm**—John Hamant portrays Franklin D. Roosevelt in another of our presidential re-enactor series.

**April 6, 11 am**—Panel program including Dr. Ronald White, Jr., and Dr. Thomas Curran, as part of the Grant Symposium.

**April 19, 10 am**—Cartoonist Dan Martin will share experiences in drawing the St. Louis Post-Dispatch Weather Bird.

**April 26, 9 am-2 pm**—Junior Ranger Day and Grant's Trail Bike Ride/Walk to Fr. Dickson Cemetery.

**May 17, 10:00 am**—Lecture and book signing by Don Corrigan, author of Environmental Missouri: Issues and Sustainability.

**June 1, 1 pm**—Dr. Gary P. Zola, author of We Called Him Rabbi Abraham: Lincoln and American Jewry, \$10.

**June 14, 10 am & 1 pm**—Collector James Schiele will discuss his collecting of 19th century prints. An exhibit of some of his prints will run from June 14 to July 9 at the site.

All programs are free unless noted. Reservations can be made by calling 314/842-1867. We look forward to seeing YOU this spring!

# Madison Barracks: History with a New Use

Fresh from the Mexican War, 26-year-old Lt. Ulysses S. Grant and his new wife, Julia, arrived at what he thought was to be his next duty station, Detroit, Michigan, in November 1848. Upon reporting to his commander, however, he was told that he was to proceed immediately to Madison Barracks at Sackets Harbor, New York, located on the eastern tip of Lake Ontario. The Grants struggled to reach the new assignment, since lake navigation was already closed for the winter. After arriving, Grant received orders to return to Detroit, but by that time winter weather prevented their return until Spring 1849.

Julia recalled that they spent a lovely winter in Sackets Harbor and made many friends. They returned to Detroit in early 1849, and then in the Spring of 1851 Grant was ordered back to Madison Barracks. Julia had been visiting family at White Haven with their son, Fred, and joined Ulysses in August.

Most sources suggest that the Grants enjoyed their time at Madison Barracks. Fred was the only child at the post and the fuss made over him delighted the Grants. Julia mentioned taking long rides on the frozen lake, bowling ten-pins, playing whist, dining with friends, and a visit to a maple sugar camp. Grant enjoyed socializing at poker and checkers.



**Madison Barracks served as a northern defense during the War of 1812 and remained an active military post through World War II. Closed shortly afterward, the community of Sackets Harbor began efforts to preserve and rehabilitate the property in the 1970s. The building where the Grants lived in 1848 has been rehabilitated into extended stay apartments. The property was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.**

Local citizens, interviewed in 1869, remembered Grant as a “diffident (shy), plain-minded gentleman, little disposed to enter into conversation but was acute and sound when the spirit moved him. He was fond of horses and rather peculiar for his hatred of the garrison band’s music.” He reportedly raced his horse against all comers and nobody beat him. Grant used tobacco but was “convinced there is no safety from ruin by liquor except by abstaining from it altogether.” He helped start a Madison Barracks “Sons of Temperance” chapter and even marched in a procession through the streets.

In the Spring of 1852, the entire 4th Infantry regiment was ordered to California, and the Grants left. But their fond memories would remain.

When the small post came close to being closed in 1876, two locals went to President Grant, who intervened to save the post. A majority of the post was abandoned in the 20th century, although the former Stony Point Target Range, renamed Fort Drum, is currently home to the Army’s 10th Mountain Division.

Today, Madison Barracks “features rehabilitated and new residential housing units in dignified architectural harmony with existing structures.” In July, the Society for the Preservation of Madison Barracks hosts a “Made In New York” festival to support Meals on Wheels and the Urban Mission of Watertown. More information can be found at their website, [www.madisonbarracks.com](http://www.madisonbarracks.com).



## Spotlight on the Park: Another Marble!

Just when we thought we had unearthed all the secrets here, a single marble was found in the Winter Kitchen lying on the stone hearth! Several archeological digs have been conducted over the park's existence. Artifacts



The newly discovered marble.

discovered in work spaces such as the Winter Kitchen give voice to the enslaved, reflecting their work and elements of their personal lives. Among the many items found were marbles. Our newly discovered marble is the same as other marbles discovered in those digs: made of limestone or marble, German-made, dating to the mid-1800s.

The abundance of marbles found suggests their popularity at White Haven. The quality of the marbles indicates that they were purchased for the Dent and Grant children. Marbles found in spaces where enslaved African Americans worked suggests they may have been given as gifts to the enslaved children. Just where our newly discovered marble came from remains a mystery for now.

## Meet the Staff: Hello and Goodbyes

It is with sadness that we share news of the passing of long-time volunteer Dick Nixon. Dick began volunteering at the site in 2000, helping at the front desk and sharing his Civil War interests by researching and writing articles for our newsletter. Illness prevented him from volunteering at the site in recent years. We miss him, but will never forget him.

We are losing our Chief of Maintenance, Mike Hayden, who is moving on to a position at Lassen Volcanic National Park in California. Although Mike's tenure at the site has been relatively short, he has led the maintenance division through numerous projects, making us "greener" and safer. Thanks, Mike, and best to you and your family in California!

We are looking forward to another busy summer and to welcoming back former seasonal Park Guide Nick Sacco. We are pleased to announce that when Nick returns, he will join the ranks of our permanent staff. Nick has been completing a master's degree in public history at Indiana University and will begin work on June 1.



## Kids' Corner: Junior Ranger Day Preview

This year's theme for Junior Ranger Day on April 26 is "Go Wild at White Haven!"

Help celebrate St. Louis' 250<sup>th</sup> birthday by traveling with TrailNet through a bit of our local history. We are partnering with Great Rivers Greenway and the Friends of Father Dickson Cemetery for a bike ride/walk from the site to the cemetery beginning at 9:00 a.m. Free parking is available at Cor Jesu Academy on Gravois Road. A shuttle will bring walkers to the site. Registration for the ride/walk will begin at 9:00 a.m., adjacent to the entrance to White Haven.



Afterwards, kids 5-12 are invited to participate in fun activities being held at the site from 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m. Enjoy 19th century songs and games, and discover diversity as we go wild at White Haven!



**Ulysses S. Grant NHS**  
**7400 Grant Road**  
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**(314) 842-1867**

## Upcoming Events

- April 5: John Hamant as Franklin D. Roosevelt, 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.
- April 6: Grant Symposium Panel, 11:00 a.m.
- April 19: Weather Bird Cartoonist Dan Martin, 10:00 a.m.
- April 26: Junior Ranger Day across the National Park Service. Join Ulysses S. Grant NHS for special activities throughout the day.
- May 17: Lecture and book signing by Don Corrigan, 10:00 a.m.
- June 1: Lecture by Dr. Gary P. Zola, 1:00 p.m.; \$10 registration fee
- June 14: James Schiele lecture, 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.
- June 14-July 9: 19th century prints exhibit from the collection of James Schiele, 9-5 daily

## Did you know?

By April 1864, the Union army was in dire need of medical supplies, widows and their children needed assistance, and African American refugees were seeking food, clothing, and shelter. Communities across the North raised funds to meet the needs of these individuals, and St. Louis was no exception.

Male community leaders started the Western Sanitary Commission in 1861, but it was women, under the auspices of the Ladies' Union Aid Society, who began to plan and organize the Mississippi Valley Sanitary Fair.

The Fair opened on May 19 to huge crowds who paid \$2 per person to enter.

Floral booths, a children's area where Nellie Grant portrayed "the Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe," food booths, displays including "relics" from General George Washington, and raffle items brought in thousands of dollars, making the Fair the second most profitable in the nation.